

Guest commentary

Freeway proponents' arguments fall short in face of lost homes

By Suzanne Wolf

According to a recent article published in *The Arizona Republic* (Corinne Purtill, December 9, 2005) "many Ahwatukee residents quietly support building the Pecos Road freeway route."

Not surprisingly, one of the residents interviewed for this story is a gentleman who works at the Palo Verde Power Plant, which is located on the westerly outskirts of Phoenix. He would understandably like to get to work quicker and feels having a back door out of Ahwatukee along the proposed freeway is the perfect solution. Well by all means, let's build this man a freeway so he can get to work faster.

Mr. Richard Liederer is quoted as saying "I've been waiting for this for 20 years." The fact that he has lived in "Ahwatukee" for 20 years tells me that he does not live in one of the more recently constructed subdivisions which would be most affected, or better still, torn down should the freeway be built. Here's another solution to your long commute time — move!

The author of the article goes on to support the theory that "many want the freeway" by stating that a 2001 survey indicated that 57 percent of those questioned were in favor of building the freeway along Pecos Road. Not surprisingly, is that the "survey" was conducted of only 304 people. I would not be surprised if, upon further investigation, we were to find out that those "surveys" were conducted at

the park-and-ride lot while commuters were getting off the bus after a long day at work. What the article also states is that the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) has not surveyed Ahwatukee residents on the matter, although I would hope they would ask more than a mere 304 of us.

Ms. Purtill goes on to state that proponents of the freeway said they would use it to reach the West Valley quoting a local resident who would use the freeway to get to the Glendale Arena. Again, with such strong arguments for the freeway such as going to a rock concert once in a while it is certainly hard to argue against the freeway!

The last and greatest argument for the freeway cited comes to us from Lynn Johnson, who is quoted as saying "if there was any kind of disaster where we needed to evacuate quickly, our surface streets are pitiful." I submit to you, Ms. Johnson, that the only sort of event that Ahwatukee residents might face which would cause a hysterical exodus would be the local plastic surgeon running out of silicone.

While these are only a few arguments voiced in favor of the freeway it does, in fact, demonstrate that there are some residents who want the freeway to go through. What we all must strongly consider is those families who stand to lose their homes if the current plan moves forward. If you must go see Paul McCartney at the Glendale Arena, simply give yourself an extra 10 minutes to get there via the existing

freeway so that 400 of your Ahwatukee neighbors can save their homes from demolition.

Suzanne Wolf is an Ahwatukee Foothills resident and freelance writer.